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## **Background Information**

In this paper I will be going into depth about the child I observed by the name Jake. Jake is an Asian little boy of the age of 3. He has a mom and a dad and is an only child.

## **Physical Development**

**Name of Child (Initials or Alias):** Jake

**Age:** 3 years old

**Center/School:** Child and Family Center

**Developmental Area:** Physical Development

**Observer:** Michelle G

**Observation 1:** After the students were done with breakfast, they were told by the teacher to go to the rug. She had placed a red bin with many books for the students to share. I went to sit at the rug with them and one by one they started going to the rug and would grab their book. Jake went to the book and grabbed the book called "Transportation". He grabbed the books and went to sit next to me and told me to read the book. I was flipping through the book, and he would point to all the different cars, boats, planes used for transportation. He read the book and pointed at the pictures; he would close the book and go grab another one.

**Date:** October 19, 2021

**Setting:** Rug Time

**Observation 2:** After about 15 minutes of letting the children read the books, Jake grabbed his book and placed it back in the red bin. He walked back to where I was sitting and sat down. The teacher started circle time by going around and saying “good morning” to all the teachers around the classroom. She continued by playing the song “The Wheels on the Bus.” As the song played, Jake would mimic the wheels going round and round or the blinkers going off and on, and window wipers. He would mimic them by using his arms to add movement. She also played the song “Let's Go Swimming,” Jake would act like he was a fish. He would have his hands together and his arms over his head to act like a fish and would walk around the rug to mimic “swimming”.

**Date:** October 19, 2021

**Setting:** Circle Time

### **Description Review**

Through my observation, I see Jake's physical development through various activities throughout the day. Whether he is going to the rug to read a book or moving around when it is circle time, I can see many domains of physical development. In the article “US DHHS Physical Development and Health Reading” it said, “Fine motor skills involve use of the small muscles found in individuals body parts especially those in the hands and feet. Children use their fine motor skills to grasp, hold and manipulate small objects and tools.” (104) I see Jake using his fine motor skills when he uses his pointer finger to point at the bus, number, fruit, or vegetable in the book. We can see a different example when moving along with the Wheels on the Bus he makes the gesture for the blinkers he opens and closes his hands. During the song One Little Finger, he uses his pointer finger to point to his nose, head, ears, and toes. In the article, it said, “Gross motor skills involve moving the whole body and using larger muscles of the body such as

those in the arms and legs. They include skills such as gaining control of the head, neck, and torso to achieve a standing or sitting position.” (103) Jake uses his larger motor skills when he walks around the rug to mimic the swimming of the fishes in the song. He uses his arm and hands to make the head of the fish, he is using his larger muscles through the multiple songs that are being sung. I can also see emerging physical skills which is a play environment that encourages lots of time and space for energetic and noise play. Morning meetings, rug time is a great example of emerging physical skills because Jake is giving time and a space where he can follow along to the music how he wants to. The teacher does songs that require a lot of movement, yoga, exercise, and mimicking gestures.

### **Social and Emotional Development**

**Name of Child (Initials or Alias):** Jake

**Age:** 3 years old

**Center/School:** Child and Family Center

**Developmental Area:** Social and emotional Development

**Observer:** Michelle G

**Observation 1:** During play time, Jake was in the kitchen with 3 other classmates. In the kitchen they have a pretend cash register with some fake money and coins. Jake loves to play with the cash register because he likes to give you some food and ask you to pay for it. There is no limit of how many students can be in the kitchen but not all the children decide to go to that as a center. Jake had some fake money and some coins; another classmate came and stuck his hand in the cup he was holding with the coins. Jake was trying to take it away from his classmates,

tugging on the cup. He said “No, Ruth this is not yours!” Since he saw she wouldn't stop he eventually pushed her.

**Date:** November 01,2021

**Setting:** Kitchen Area

**Observation 2:** As I was observing the classroom and noticed there was a chart with cutouts of flowers put and, in the middle, they would have the months of the year. In some flowerpots they would have some flowers which would represent the child's birthday. Next to that chart on the wall were pictures of Jake's family, it was his mom and dad and him in the middle. During lunch time he pointed at the picture and said, “That's me”.

**Date:** November 01, 2021

**Setting:** Classroom

### **Description Review**

Jake's social and emotional development has been seen in different parts of my observations. Whether that is the reactions to negative emotions or positive emotions, interaction with his peers and the adults (teachers) and self-regulation. In *Basics of Developmentally Appropriate Practice* by Carol Copple and Sue Bredekamp; it said, “Children may share when given the opportunity. Sometimes they can wait for a short while for a turn. Children can use their newfound language skills to voice their feelings during conflicts with others and may be able to voice solutions to problems. However, they may still resort to physical aggression.” (74) Jake does use his voice to express his feelings when there's a conflict with another student. When he feels like the other students do not understand how he is feeling he gets frustrated and tugs on the toy or pushes his classmates. He does start to form some friendships with the rest of his classmates but still has a hard time maintaining them. In the article about emotional development

it said, “Children develop a firm sense of their sex, age, race, language, and culture. They are beginning to develop a sense of self-concept—an understanding of their own unique characteristics. By age 3½ they will be able to describe key attributes about themselves.” (75) As I mentioned in my observation, I can see the teacher shows the children pride in who they are by incorporating their home languages on signs around the classroom. The teacher has some cultural objects around the room, such as family portraits, family trees, children’s birthdays, photographs of children and family. They also have activities where some parents come to the classroom and spend some time with Jake and his friends. In the US DHHS Social Emotional Development Reading it said, “providing warm, positive relationships with the teacher and other adults, helping children make friends with other children and developing interest and abilities.” (86) Jake has shown having a good relationship with the adults in the classroom and around the building. Jake also interacted with his classmates during center, breakfast, and lunch. He has some difficulty learning how to express what he feels when other students make him feel uncomfortable or upset and not go directly to pushing or shoving them.

### **Cognitive Development**

**Name of Child (Initials or Alias):** Jake

**Age:** 3 years old

**Center/School:** Child and Family Center

**Developmental Area:** Cognitive Development

**Observer:** Michelle G

**Observation 1:** After rug time the students were asked to choose a center, they wanted to work in. Jake chose the kitchen as his first center choice; he went to the kitchen and grab the plates. He

placed them on the table, one for Ms. Angie and one for me. He asked, "What do you want to eat today?" I told him, "I would like some spaghetti with meatballs." when he came back in his hand was a plate with pretend spaghetti and meatballs and said, "Here you go". After I finished, I gave him the plate and he took it and said that would be \$5 dollars. He used his pretend cash register and handed me some money back. After a while he grabbed the fireproof helmet and put on the vest, and he stood by the phone and pretended to take an emergency phone call.

**Date:** October 25, 2021

**Setting:** Dramatic Play

**Observation 2:** After being in the kitchen for some time he saw one of his classmates pull out the sea animals and the insects. He left the plate he had in his hand in the kitchen and walked over to where the animals were. Another classmate of his brought small nets that are used to catch butterflies. He would guard the spider and pregnant to make it crawl on my arm, when he noticed I turned around he asked, "Are you afraid of spiders?" I replied, "Yes I was." I started singing Itsy-Bitsy Spider and he started using his hands as gestures to mimic the spider going up the waterspout. After a while, he grabbed the small net, placed it on insects on the floor next to the table and pretended to catch them. He took the insects out the net and placed it back in the bin.

**Date:** November 16, 2021

**Setting:** Science area

### **Description Review**

During center time is the time where I would see Jake's imagination and critical thinking play out. He knew how things worked in the kitchen but sometimes he would use it differently changing its function. Jake is a very creative little boy who uses his imagination and real-world

knowledge and puts it into context for him to understand the environment around him. In “Chopsticks and Counting Chips: Do Play and Foundational Skills Need to Compete for the Teacher’s Attention in an Early Childhood Classroom?” by Elena Bodrova and Deborah J. Leong, it said, “When they do engage in sociodramatic play, children rarely try a new theme, preferring instead to act out the familiar scenarios of family, school, and doctor. Even books and TV shows filled with information about realistic as well as fantasy settings and characters often fail to inspire children to turn the housekeeping area into a space station or animal hospital.” (5) This also connects with Jake’s observation because as it mentions in the article children rely on the knowledge they already know from books, outside world, home, books and put it into their own perspective to make sense of the world around them. This is related to Jake because when we read books before center time, he always points out to me cars he already knows or has seen on his way to school or home. With that knowledge he has from the outside world he comes into the classroom puts on the police helmet and the vest and pretends to take a call of an emergency. He goes round the classroom telling the teacher who he is trying to mimic and does the same with the firefighter props. In the article it also said, “... studies show the links between play and many fundamental skills and complex cognitive activities, such as memory, self-regulation, distancing and contextualization, oral language abilities, symbolic generalization, successful school adjustments and better social skills.” (6) I’ve noticed through my observation Jake has made some improvement in his cognitive development. Through play Jake has been able to form friendships with his classmates and create small conversations with them. He has been able to put how he interprets the world into context for him and even the children playing with him to understand.



## Language development

**Name of Child (Initials or Alias):** Jake

**Age:** 3 years old

**Center/School:** Child and Family Center

**Developmental Area:** Language Development

**Observer:** Michelle G

**Observation 1:** Jake follows directions and pays attention when the teacher asks him to do something. For the most part he is put as an example or gets compliments like a good job by the teacher. When the rest of his classmates see him sitting cross-legged the rest follow. He is a very talkative person and whether the teacher has a question he always has an answer. The teacher would ask Jake “Can you tell me one thing around the classroom that is the color green?” Jake would point and say “the big tree is green; it has green leaves. “He can communicate with his voice and if he's not sure what the certain thing is called, he uses his finger to point. During lunch Jake would raise his cup in the air and say, “Can I have more milk please?” Or when he was done with his food he would say “I am done, look I finished all my pasta. It tasted delicious.”

**Date:** December 3, 2021

**Setting:** Rug

**Observation 2:** During circle time, every Tuesday when I have gone to do my observations the teacher always has new words to go over. She goes over the days of the week, the ABC's, and the children's names. She sometimes has objects and asks the children questions about it. When the teacher asks question like, “Can someone tell me what starts with the letter a?” Jake would

raise his hand and say, “Apple starts with A!” He would do the same with all the letters the teacher would mention.

**Date:** November 30, 2021

**Setting:** Rug/ Circle time

### **Description Review**

From the first time I’ve met Jake I can see a huge difference in his language development. Before he wouldn’t say much when he was at the center with his classmates. Now I notice he is the one who starts the conversation with his classmates. When he speaks it’s very clear for the most part. He also listens not only to the person with authority but his classmates as well. In the article “Creating Classrooms That Promote Rich Vocabularies for At-Risk Learners” by Deanna L. Nekovei and Shirley A. Ermis, it said, “young children do not acquire oral language effortlessly. Language development is a complex task involving, first and foremost, an inner desire to communicate with others. Language development also requires the ability to hear and make sense out of the sounds, words, and phrases of spoken language. In addition, children must acquire the ability to visually” (90). Connecting that quote back to Jake, I feel like it was a lot harder for him to communicate with others and even with his teachers, he was more on the shy side. But as time has gone by, he’s a lot more comfortable saying “please and thank you”, he can put long sentences together and it’s very clear when he speaks. What also helped him gain some more confidence would be having the teacher at meeting time go over certain words or the ABC’s. In the article it also said, “As Ms. Longoria encourages the children to take initiative in their own learning, she is aware that many of them have had limited experiences due to their age and the fact that they come from economically disadvantaged homes that have limited language

and literacy resources.” (91) At first, I would think the teacher would have them read a book after breakfast for a distraction so she could get the tables cleaned and take the children to the bathroom. But as I tested to read more and pay more attention, I started to realize how important those 30 minutes of reading time were. Not only does the books help them with their language development but may not have reading time at home and the teachers want to make sure they at least have some time at school to read. When it's reading time, Jake grabs the books and uses his imagination and creates a story on his own using the pictures.

### **Conclusion**

Throughout the 2 months I have been observing Jake, I can see some growth made from the first time I met him. Whether it has to do with physical, cognitive, social emotions and language development he made some growth in each domain, in some he does need to work on certain aspects but as time goes by, he will get better in these developmental domains. With physical domain there will for the most part always be at least 30 minutes during the day to improve on this development. As he starts to grow up, he will start to encounter situations where we will learn how to throw a ball to the person across from him or be exposed to outdoor activities that require a lot more body movement. In his social and emotional development, he lacks interaction with his classmates because he does not seem to click with everyone. Jake has good interactions with teachers, is very respectful and always says “please, thank you, good morning, or bye”. Teachers have been able to gain that trust and have that communication with him which helps build that relationship they ended with each other. Jake is a little boy who uses his imagination a lot in any center he is in. He relates what he always knows and applies it to a real-world situation like dressing up like a firefighter and pretending to answer the phone for an emergency. He’s a child that does not get distorted by what his other classmates might be doing;

he stays very focused and pays attention to the teacher. Jake's language development is a mixture of both hand gestures and oral, he doesn't have a problem using either. When the teacher starts singing the clean-up song, his immediate response is to start cleaning the kitchen. He is a very good listener and does not have a problem doing what is being asked from him. Jake's journey of development is just taking off; he is growing in each developmental domain. With having an environment where he feels comfortable and building a relationship with his teacher and classmates and having the right resources he will be able to improve his developmental domains.

## **Part 2- Commentary**

I chose this child initially because when I first walked into the classroom the students were having breakfast. As I walked through the door, he was the first one who said, "Good Morning, what's your name?" His personality stood out to me and after breakfast was over, he came over to me and grabbed my hand to go sit with him and read a book. What is unique about him is he was not shy like all the other students; he would keep the conversation going. He would also always question what I was doing, for example, I was tying my shoes and he asked, "What are you doing?" I replied, "I am tying my shoe. Do you know how to tie your shoe?" While he was seeing me tie my shoes, he untied his shoe and started mimicking what I was doing. In the end I had to re-tie his shoes because he couldn't tie them after he created the knot.

What surprised me about the child's development over the course of the semester would be his cognitive and language development. With his cognitive development as time went by, he used the abilities of reasoning, memory, problem-solving and thinking skills to make sense and organize the world around him. For example, he loved to always go to the kitchen as the center he chose. He would pick up the plates and set them around the table and would place the

pretend food on them. He would come to me and hand me the pretend credit card and would bring the pretend cash register with him. I would hand him my credit card and he would hand me some money. He used problem-solving with her classmates and when he encountered a problem of his own. Sometimes he would notice that his classmates were having a hard time sharing a toy, he would go into the kitchen and look for something else to stop the fighting. This connects to his cognitive development because he is using his knowledge that he sees in the outside world and uses that information to play in the dramatic play center and put things into context for himself to understand the environment around him. His language development has improved from the first few times I observed him as he now can have a conversation with others and keeps it going. When the students are giving lunch and asking for more milk or fruit, he was a bit quiet at first, but now he says it very confidently and says please and thank you. As time has gone by, he has adapted to the idea of saying please and thank you, he's able to form longer sentences.

I would use this developmental information about my child to set up the physical environment by adding a lot of hands-on materials in the different centers. Jack is a very hands-on person, and he used his imagination a lot as can be seen through the pretend play kitchen, dramatic play dress up and with the pretend insects and sea animals. I would add enough room around the classroom and move some things around as I think some areas like the library aren't used by him. The developmental information will help me set up the physical environment for interpersonal contact by adding an equal number of students at the same time because Jake does like to start conversation with the rest of his classmates. I would change seats around during lunch since Jake is one to talk a lot, I would sit him with others that are more on the quiet side. I would set up the environment differently by adding more time during rug time because I feel like during rug time is where they get to learn more about each other and themselves. Every week

during drug time they had a different topic. For example, they had topics like favorite fruits, ABC's, number of family members, community helpers, holidays, etc. Having more time to emphasize these topics is very ideal for 3-year-olds as they get to learn more about themselves and about others, they start to realize not everything is about them and they must consider other classmates' feelings.

What I learn most about young children from my experience in the fieldwork would be every child is unique in their own way and they all have at least one thing you can learn from them. You must be patient with them and understand the strategy you use with one child does not always work with another child. At first when you first meet young children you might not understand why they do things a certain way but as time goes by you will slowly start to understand why doing certain things their way is helpful for them. I also learned the importance of creating a bond with them and the impact it has on them. I say this because as I started coming more frequently the children and I created a bond with one another, by creating small talk with them and involving myself when they are playing in the kitchen or during an art activity, they slowly started opening up with me.

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## **References**

Carol Copple, Sue Bredekamp, Derry Koralek and Kathy Charner, editors. Developmentally Appropriate Practice. Focus on Preschoolers. Washington, DC :National Association for the Education of Young Children, 2013.